

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT SILVESTRI

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 1999

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Silvestri, the esteemed Chief of Police in Chisholm, MN.

Chief Silvestri recently announced his retirement after serving 33 years in the Chisholm Police Department. My hometown of Chisholm will miss the inspired dedication and commitment he brought to the police department.

Chief Silvestri began his law enforcement career by training at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in 1966. Following his training, Robert Silvestri became a patrol officer for the Chisholm Police Department. Eventually, his dedication to the police force led to his promotion as desk lieutenant, and then administrative assistant. Each of those positions gave Robert Silvestri a better understanding of and appreciation for all aspects of law enforcement. Because of his experience and knowledge of law enforcement, Robert Silvestri was hired as chief of police in 1983. He held this position until his recent retirement from the Chisholm Police Department.

Throughout his service at the Chisholm Police Department, Robert Silvestri believed strongly in the law enforcement community and his colleagues. Even through adversity, Chief Silvestri maintained a level head and respect for his fellow law enforcement officers. His open door made his co-workers feel at ease, and he learned to adapt his management and law enforcement skills to changing laws and societal behavior. Furthermore, I commend Robert's wife and the Silvestri family for supporting him through the years.

Police Chief Robert Silvestri maintained the public safety and tranquility in Chisholm for 33 years. I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Robert Silvestri for his many years of service and dedication to the Chisholm Police Department and the entire Iron Range community.

TRIBUTE TO MARK FRIESTAD

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize the winner of the 1999 "Great American Think-Off." This year's champion is Mark Friestad, a high school social studies teacher who proved to his students that learning is a life-long pursuit to be enjoyed and celebrated.

Mark is a dedicated young teacher in my hometown of Valley City, North Dakota, who exemplifies the state's exceptional teachers.

He was among 500 contestants from around the country competing in the Great American Think-Off held in New York Mills, Minnesota. The task was the best answer to the question: Which is more dangerous: Science or Religion? Selected as one of four finalists to debate the merits of his essay, Mark convinced the crowd of 400 with thoughtful arguments supporting his thesis. At the end of the day, the audience felt that he had best illustrated

his point that the more dangerous idea between science and religion is the one accepted more blindly—science.

While Mark is to be commended for his insightful debate and well-researched essay, perhaps just as important is his participation. Reading about and studying topics of interest should not be limited to our school years, but rather encouraged and practiced at every age level. Formal education and official degrees are the runways for learning, but our country has taken flight thanks to the help of great life-long thinkers.

How fortunate we are to have thoughtful, studious individuals who dedicate their careers to the public education of our young people. I congratulate Mr. Friestad for teaching by example, and picking up the title of "America's Greatest Thinker" along the way.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HENIKA DISTRICT LIBRARY IN WAYLAND, MICHIGAN

HON. PETER HOEKSTRA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 1999

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to officially recognize the 100th anniversary of the Henika District Library, located in Wayland, Michigan, part of the Second Congressional District, which I represent.

The Henika Library was established in 1899 as a legacy of Mrs. Julia Henika, who upon her death left \$2,000 to the Wayland Ladies Library Association for the construction of a library. Aided by contributions from Mrs. Henika's husband, George, and her mother, Mary Forbes, this picturesque library formally opened in 1900.

Initially, the library was run by the independent Library Association for many years before turning it over to the village of Wayland. At that time, the facility's first paid librarian, Miss Fannie Hoyt, was hired. She served in her position until the 1940s, when she was succeeded by Dorothy Peterson, who served as librarian until 1975. Barbara Crofoot then became the library's third head librarian and served for 10 years until she was succeeded by the current librarian, Lynn Mandaville.

Henika Library has served the Wayland area as a source of information and entertainment from the Gilded Age to the Information Age. The original building was first expanded in 1968 with an addition in the rear with a full basement, effectively tripling the size of the facility. A reading room was created the next year by enclosing the front porch.

In the early 1990s, the building received a complete makeover, inside and out, with financial assistance from the Wayland Downtown Development Authority, an outstate equity grant and contributions from the city of Wayland and Wayland Township. This remodeling made the library ready for the 21st century by providing public access computers, an online card catalog and public access to the Internet. In addition, a local company, Ampro Industries, donated several thousand dollars to remodel the basement children's library.

Today, Henika District Library continues to serve the community in the same manner

Julia Henika envisioned a century ago. I am proud to honor her memory and the hard work and dedication of so many people to make that vision a reality.

TRIBUTE TO WINSTON BLEDSOE

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 1999

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, senior citizen centers are fairly recent to our culture. Many of the centers that exist today were created in the early 1970's with the help of federal grants. Strong local leadership transform these centers into places many older citizens now depend on for warm wholesome meals, fellowship and recreation and a way to support the maintenance of an independent life style.

Twenty-seven years ago, using a \$25,000 budget provided by a "model grant," Winston Bledsoe started the first agency in Southwest Missouri to organize and open senior centers. The Southwest Missouri Office on Aging grew out of that effort and opened nine senior centers in six weeks in 1973.

Today, the agency that Bledsoe helped create provides services and a daily meeting place for more than 40,000 seniors a year. The Southwest Missouri Office on Aging has 38 centers and a budget of more than \$6.8 million providing individual social services, transportation, meals, recreation and home-maker care. Bledsoe encouraged seniors at each center to own their own building, thereby reducing the government's role in the future of the facilities in case federal aid was ever curbed or interrupted.

Dorothy Knowles, who was Bledsoe's chief lieutenant over the last quarter century and the new agency director, calls Winston a visionary, who was "dedicated to the lowest cost of keeping older people independent." For most people, quality of life is defined by their degree of independence.

Bledsoe has been a tireless advocate for seniors and group who serve them. He has often battled bureaucrats, politicians, and local opponents. He has not always been diplomatic but he has never forgotten who he serves. The interest of older Southwest Missourians are always foremost in his efforts.

Winston, at age 70, retired as the director of the agency this year. A former insurance salesman and football coach, his third career will leave a legacy cherished by every senior in Southwest Missouri who finds friends, support and nourishing meals at one of the centers that Bledsoe nurtured.

WILLARD MUNGER, MINNESOTA'S ENVIRONMENTAL ICON

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 1999

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, July 11, Minnesota lost our most senior, longest serving, best loved friend, mentor and state representative, Willard Munger at the age of 88.

After forty-eight years of public service and a lifetime of fighting for people and the environment, DFLer Willard Munger stands as a